



i2i

Integrate to Innovate in the Northern Periphery

Networking has become a buzz word in business and management, and evidence is abundant that good networking promotes increased business-to-business activity, as well as opportunities for creative thinking and problem solving. This is particularly important in the Northern Periphery region given the climatic, geographic, environmental and social composition. i2i aims to connect networks of people through an internet based platform, in order to develop an integrated process to facilitate and support innovation within complex partnerships (micro/SME sectors, academia and public authorities) across the 5 partner countries. The positive exploitation of their inherent knowledge, expertise, and personal and professional networks, will result in new business opportunities across the sectors. An important element of this is the provision of explicit guidance and mentoring on how to develop effective transnational networking relationships, through the creation of a guide and learning tools. This will offer the opportunity for individual, organisational and systemic learning through case studies, exchange of experience through meetings and conferences, as well the development of competence in cross-sector, multi-disciplinary networking.

Objectives

The main objectives are:

- to stimulate interest and engagement in networking
- to identify existing networks (local, national, cross-border, transnational , cross-sectoral) that support or are connected to those networks
- to carry out further investigations into the current understanding of networks and the art of networking
- to offer an environment suitable for the exchange of experience and organise events that blend networking opportunities with case studies and explicit learning opportunities
- to develop a dynamic and supportive internet platform (system network)
- to develop a best practice, user-friendly guide to transnational , cross cultural collaborative networking

Project activities

The aim is to create a dynamic, multi-dimensional “network of networks” to integrate academic, public sector organisations and micro/SMEs into a creative, collaborative and sustainable framework. This will incorporate various complementary strands/ themes and existing partnerships and knowledge; recognising that each network is at a different level of development.

The project consists of a number of work packages:

1. Stimulate demand and encourage organisational learning
2. Identification of networks and evaluation of strengths and weaknesses
3. Networking activities
4. Evaluation, monitoring and sustainability planning
5. Internet platform development
6. International collaboration & networking guide
7. Dissemination
8. Management

Expected results

- Enhanced and integrated communication channels in the northern periphery
- Personal and professional benefits through participating in the project or by gaining access to the information and signposting available on the internet platform. Personal benefits would include greater understanding of the concept of networking, and explicit advice on how and why to improve these skills through case studies and tips (both at the networking events and on the website), as well as the added value of meeting like-minded or complementary individuals.
- Heightened awareness within SMEs, and other organisations involved in the project, of the value of networking and collaboration
- Development of new projects, new business opportunities, better use of resources, improved personal skills and increased transnational and cross-border activity
- Innovative approaches to building partnerships and business momentum
- Solutions to existing business problems in the periphery, i.e. succession planning

Partners

Fusion - Scotland
Development Centre of East Iceland - Iceland
Uminova Innovation - Sweden
Helsinki School of Economics - Finland
KunnskapsParke - Norway
Innovation Norway - Norway

Measure

2.2

Total Budget

1 072 115

NPP Award

616 269

Project Period

01/01/2005 - 31/12/2007

Countries Involved

Scotland, Sweden, Iceland, Finland, Norway

Lead Partner

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